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ABSTRACT

This speech transcript addresses five questions about global trends in civic education for democracy: (1) What is happening in civic education throughout the world? (2) What are common strengths and weaknesses in civic education? (3) Does civic education work? (4) What policies should guide the development and implementation of civic education programs and what indices should be used to determine how well civic education is established? and (5) What is the value of international cooperation and exchanges in the development and implementation of civic education programs? (BT)

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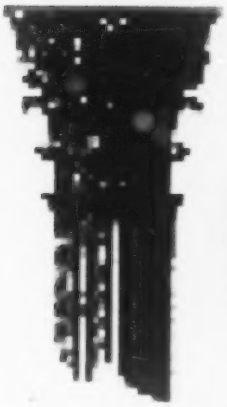

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Global Trends in Civic Education

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March 29, 2000

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Global Trends in Civic Education

A Speech given at the
Seminar for the Needs for New Indonesian Civic Education
Center for Indonesian Civic Education (CICED)
March 29, 2000
Bandung, Indonesia

Charles N. Quigley, Executive Director
Center for Civic Education

Introduction

I have used five questions regarding global trends in civic education for democracy to organize my presentation today. My perspective on these questions is limited by the extent of my studies and experiences so I do not claim that my answers to them will be as comprehensive as they might be. The questions are:

I. What is happening in civic education throughout the world?

II. What are common strengths and weakness in civic education?

III. Does civic education work?

IV. What policies should guide the development and implementation of civic education programs and what indices should be used to determine how well civic education is established?

V. What is the value of international cooperation and exchanges in the development and implementation of civic education programs?

I. What is happening in civic education throughout the world?

During the 1990s there appears to have been a rapidly growing interest throughout the world in the development and implementation of educational programs in schools that are designed to help young people become competent and responsible citizens in democratic political systems. This interest has been most directly focused on civic education programs at the pre-collegiate level although attention is increasingly being focused on students in colleges and universities and in some places in community or adult education.

Given the fall of communist governments, the interest in educational programs supporting emerging democracies is not surprising. But attention to civic education or education for democracy, both terms are used, has not been limited to post-communist countries and other countries with a short history of

democracy. It is apparent that there is widespread recognition in the established democracies as well that democracy requires more than the writing of constitutions and the establishment of democratic institutions. Ultimately, for a democracy to work, it must lie in the hearts and minds of its citizens. Democracy needs a political culture that supports it.

A. International networks and cooperation.

Today most programs in civic education are limited solely to the nations in which they originated. However, since the collapse of communism there has been an increasing tendency for educators in emerging and advanced democracies to work together sharing ideas, programs, and experiences that are mutually beneficial. We who are working in this field are learning from each other.

Throughout the 1990s, there has been a rapid increase in the development of international networks of civic educators. The extent of such communication and cooperation now constitutes an international movement in civic education. This movement is loosely knit and it has a number of centers and sources of support.

In Western Europe, the German Federal Center for Civic Education has been engaged for decades in the promotion of educational programs supporting democracy in West Germany and more recently they have directed their attention to the states that were formerly a part of East Germany. The German Center also has a history of programs with other Western European nations and, since the fall of communism, has increasingly included representatives of Eastern European nations and the Newly Independent States of the former Soviet Union (EEN/NIS). For about twenty years, American educators have taken part in collaborative programs cosponsored by the Center for Civic Education (Center).

Since the fall of the Soviet bloc, a number of other cooperative programs involving western European nations and the EEN/NIS have been supported. Some of the most prominent sources of support for these programs have been the European Union, the Council of Europe, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the World Bank, and the Soros Foundation.

Civitas International. In 1995, the United States Information Agency (USIA), which merged with the U.S. State Department in 1999, made civic education a priority for its Washington office and its United States Information Service posts (USIS) located in nations throughout the world. Funding from the USIA supported a meeting entitled Civitas@Prague that was attended by over 450 civic educators and private and public sector leaders from 52 nations. This meeting culminated in the establishment of a membership organization entitled Civitas International, a non-governmental agency with offices in Strasbourg, France.

The Center was one of the founding organizations of Civitas International. The term civitas is used according to one of its Latin meanings, a community of like minded individuals, in this case, a community of people devoted to civic education to support democracy. Before the founding of Civitas International, the term had been used by the Center as the title for a work entitled Civitas: A Framework for Civic Education, a resource for civic educators in the United States that has been found useful by colleagues in other nations. The term "civitas" is now used as well by many of the groups affiliated with Civitas International and the Center to identify their programs, e.g., Civitas@Bosnia and Herzegovina, Civitas Hungary, and Civitas Nigeria.

Since its inception, Civitas International has sponsored conferences of civic educators in South America, Europe, Africa, and Asia. About 90 centers from throughout the world are members of Civitas International. The organization also hosts Civnet (www.civnet.org) a website provided as a service to

those interested in civic education and as a means of linking civic educators and their colleagues from throughout the world.

To enhance the Civitas movement, USIS offices (now a part of U.S. Embassies) throughout the world have provided support for civic education programs in the form of travel grants and small grants to support civic education activities in the nations in which they are located.

Civitas: An International Civic Education Program. The Center's major international program is entitled Civitas: An International Civic Education Exchange Program. It is funded by the U.S. Department of Education and conducted with the cooperation of the U.S. Department of State. Currently the largest international civic education program in the world, the Civitas Exchange Program includes exchanges among twenty of the fifty U.S. states and 27 nations. We are pleased that the Center for Indonesian Civic Education (CICED) has become a partner in this program, conducted with the assistance of the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta.

In addition to the networks in civic education affiliated with Civitas International and the Center's Civitas Exchange Program, there are other international networks in the field funded by such organizations as the Council of Europe, the European Union, the United States Agency for International Development, and the Soros Foundation. I am sure more exist; I apologize to their constituents for any networks I may have omitted.

B. Global trends in civic education for democracy.

In addition to noting the emergence of international networks and the cooperation among people working in the field of civic education, I would like to comment upon programmatic trends that appear to be global. In doing so I will rely on the work of John Patrick who is the Executive Director of the Social Studies Development Center at Indiana University at Bloomington which is a part of the Center's Civitas Exchange Program network. He has identified nine trends that "have broad potential for influencing civic education in the constitutional democracies of the world."

Trend 1: Conceptualization of civic education in terms of three interrelated components. Many educators throughout the world focus their programs upon the development of civic knowledge, civic skills, and civic virtues.

> **Civic knowledge** consists of fundamental ideas and information that learners must know and use to become effective and responsible citizens of a democracy.
>
> **Civic skills** include the intellectual skills needed to understand, explain, compare, and evaluate principles and practices of government and citizenship. They also include participatory skills that enable citizens to monitor and influence public policies.
>
> **Civic virtues** include the traits of character, dispositions, and commitments necessary for the preservation and improvement of democratic governance and citizenship. Examples of civic virtues are respect for the worth and dignity of each person, civility, integrity, self-discipline, tolerance, compassion, and patriotism. Commitments include a dedication to human rights, the common good, equality, and a rule of law.

Trend 2: Systematic teaching of fundamental ideas or core concepts. Civic educators are systematically teaching concepts of democratic governance and citizenship such as popular sovereignty, individual rights, the common good, authority, justice, freedom, constitutionalism and rule of law, and

representative democracy

Trend 3: Analysis of case studies. Teachers are requiring students to apply core concepts or principles to the analysis of case studies. The use of case studies brings the drama and vitality of authentic civic life into the classroom and requires the practical application of fundamental ideas or concepts to make sense of the data of civic reality.

Trend 4: Development of decision-making skills. Teachers use case studies of political and legal issues to help students develop decision-making skills. Students are taught to identify issues, to examine the alternative choices and the likely consequences of each choice, and to defend one choice as better than the others.

Trend 5: Comparative and international analysis of government and citizenship. The global resurgence of constitutional democracy has aroused interest in the comparative method of teaching and learning about government and citizenship. Teachers are requiring students to compare institutions of constitutional democracy in their own country with institutions in other democracies of the contemporary world. The expectation is that this kind of comparative analysis will deepen students' understanding of their own democratic institutions while expanding their knowledge of democratic principles. Further, this kind of comparative analysis is likely to diminish ethnocentrism, as students learn the various ways that principles of democracy can be practiced (Hall 1993).

Trend 6: Development of participatory skills and civic virtues through cooperative learning activities. Teachers are emphasizing cooperative learning in small groups, which requires students to work together to achieve a common objective. Through this cooperative learning activity, students develop various participatory skills and the civic virtues associated with them. Learners involved regularly in cooperative learning situations tend to develop such skills as leadership, conflict resolution, compromise, negotiation, and constructive criticism (Slavin 1991). And they develop such virtues as toleration, civility, and trust (Stahl and VanSickle 1992).

Trend 7: The use of literature to teach civic virtues. Civic educators have recognized that the study of literature, both fictional and historical, exposes students to interesting people who exemplify civic virtues in dramatic situations. The characters in these stories, therefore, may become role models for students. At the very least, they are positive examples of particular civic virtues that can help students understand the meaning and importance of morality in civic life. Sandra Stotsky, an expert on using literature to teach civic virtues, stresses the educational value of exposing learners "to characters who exhibit such traits as courage, hope, optimism, ambition, individual initiative, love of country, love of family, the ability to laugh at themselves, a concern for the environment, and outrage at social injustice." (Stotsky, 1992)

Trend 8: Active learning of civic knowledge, skills, and virtues. Civic educators are involving students actively in their acquisition of knowledge, skills, and virtues. Examples of active learning include systematic concept learning, analysis of case studies, development of decision-making skills, cooperative learning tasks, and the interactive group discussions that are associated with teaching civic virtues through literary study. Intellectually active learning, in contrast to passive learning, appears to be associated with higher levels of achievement. Furthermore, it enables students to develop skills and processes needed for independent inquiry and civic decision making throughout a lifetime. These are capacities of citizenship needed to make a constitutional democracy work.

Trend 9: The conjoining of content and process in teaching and learning of civic knowledge, skills, and virtues. In their development of curricula and classroom lessons, teachers are recognizing that civic

virtues and skills, intellectual and participatory, are inseparable from a body of civic knowledge or content. They assume that if learners would think critically and act effectively and virtuously in response to a public issue, they must understand the terms of the issue, its origins, the alternative responses to it, and the likely consequences of these responses. This understanding is based upon their knowledge. And the application of this knowledge to explain, evaluate, and resolve a public issue depends upon the cognitive process skills of the learners.

Basic content or subject matter and fundamental cognitive processes or operations are interrelated factors of teaching and learning. To elevate one over the other—content over process or vice versa—is a pedagogical flaw that interferes with effective civic education. Both academic content and process—civic knowledge, virtues, and skills—must be taught and learned in tandem to fulfill the mission of civic education, which is the development of individuals with the capacity to establish, maintain, and improve democratic governance and citizenship in their country and throughout the world.

II. What are common strengths and weaknesses in civic education?

So far my discussion has been limited to observations arising from my own and my colleagues participation in the various programs I have noted. These observations may be enhanced by summarizing some findings from the most extensive international study of movements in civic education in the world. This is the Civic Education Study conducted during the 1990s by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), a consortium of educational research institutes in 53 countries with headquarters in Amsterdam. The goal of the study is to "examine…ways in which young people are prepared for their roles as citizens in democracies and societies aspiring to be democracies" (Tourney-Purta, Scheille, and Amadeo, 1999).

The first publication from the study reports on findings from 24 countries that include developed and developing democracies. It is interesting to note that a dozen themes were identified across countries including the following:

> "There is a common core of topics across countries in civic education. There is unanimity among authors of the national case studies that civic education should be
>
> - based on important content that crosses disciplines
> - participative
> - interactive
> - related to life
> - conducted in a non-authoritarian environment
> - cognizant of the challenges of social diversity, and
> - constructed with the parents, the community, and nongovernmental organizations as well as the school."

The authors go on to note that, "Despite extensive efforts, there has not been universal success in any country in…achieving these goals for all students." After working in the field of civic education for the past 35 years in the United States I can say with confidence that this statement is unfortunately true of my country as well as most of the others with which I am familiar. In the United States, the recent National Assessment of Educational Progress in Civics revealed that only 25% of our students are proficient in the subject. In this respect, we have much in common with the other countries participating in the IEA study.

The study also identifies a number of factors that hamper the implementation of sound programs in civic

education in the countries studied. They may sound familiar to many of you who work in this field. I will summarize these factors below and take the liberty of adding a few observations from my experience.

- Resistance from the older generation, including teachers who continue beliefs and practices of authoritarian political cultures or sub-cultures.

- Slowness of institutional change in schools not only when content is changed, but also when new pedagogical methods are introduced. I would like to add a comment to this finding. Good civic education requires sound content taught with engaging and interactive methodology. To focus on either content or methodology alone is a mistake. I have also found it common both in the United States and in other countries for teachers, who often do not have adequate content background, to stress interesting new interactive methodologies at the expense of content. The students and their teachers often find the resulting activities enjoyable, but little is learned.

- Decentralization of educational decision-making and the design and implementation of curricular programs with inadequate resources to carry out the necessary tasks. Such decentralization of curricular development can also be very inefficient and result in a multiplicity of poorly developed programs.

- Resistance to democratic teaching styles and the empowerment of students. Interactive methodology, discussion, debate, simulation of democratic procedures, and programs designed to empower students are inevitably noisier and potentially more disruptive than traditional instructional methods. This may mirror democracy itself, which engenders but peacefully manages conflict and debate, as opposed to authoritarianism, which typically suppress such behaviors.

- Low status of civic education compared with other disciplines such as mathematics, science, reading, language arts, and history. It is often seen, sometimes correctly, as lacking in rigor.

- Lack of adequate requirements for civic education. It is common to hear that civic education has been "infused" in the social studies curriculum or that it is adequately dealt with in other disciplines, the culture of the school, or the process of schooling itself. What this means is that civic education is not identifiable in the curriculum. It is not taught explicitly, rigorously, or systematically.

- Single course. The most common approach in the United States and in many other countries is to limit civic education to one course at the secondary level. This is not enough to develop proficiency in the field.

- Associating civic education with past indoctrination programs. Resistance to civic education in formerly authoritarian regimes is often the result of mistakenly seeing it as similar to the indoctrination programs in Marxist ideology. People do not want to replace their old form of indoctrination with what they see as just another form of indoctrination in a new ideology.

- Inadequate preparation of teachers. Many developed democracies as well as emerging democracies face the problem of not having enough adequately trained teachers in civic education and not having the resources to train them. Although there is no research on the qualifications of teachers of civics, I would estimate that in the U.S. less than 15% have the training they need to provide adequate instruction.

- Dealing with diversity and the gap between ideas and reality. Other problems common to many of

us in different nations include dealing with diversity and helping students learn to deal productively with the gap between the ideals and reality in democratic political systems.

III. Does civic education work?

There has not been enough research on the impact of civic education on students in the United States or in any other country with which I am familiar. However, we have done enough in the United States and recently in Bosnia and Herzegovina to feel confident that good teachers and good programs in civic education can make a difference. Studies show that students in these programs have a clear understanding of the fundamental values and principles of their heritage and their relevance to their daily lives. These students are more tolerant than others, they support rights not only for themselves but for those who differ from them, they feel more politically efficacious, and they participate in political life far more than other students. Although young people become more critical of the current state of affairs, this does not lead to their withdrawal, but to their becoming more interested in working to narrow the gap between the ideals of our system and the reality. They become the kind of citizens required for a democracy to survive and flourish.

IV. What policies should guide the development and implementation of civic education programs and what indices should be used to determine how well civic education is established?

Although it has been argued that the establishment of the proper institutions is sufficient to maintain a free society, it is clear that even the most well designed institutions are not sufficient. Ultimately, a free society must rely on the knowledge, skills, and virtue of its citizens and those they elect to public office. Civic education, therefore, is essential to the establishment, preservation, and improvement of any constitutional democracy.

The goal of education in civics and government should be informed, responsible participation in political life by competent citizens committed to the fundamental values and principles of constitutional democracy. Their effective and responsible participation requires the acquisition of a body of knowledge and of intellectual and participatory skills. Effective and responsible participation also is furthered by development of certain dispositions or traits of character that enhance the individual's capacity to participate in the political process and contribute to the healthy functioning of the political system and improvement of society.

Many institutions help to develop citizens' knowledge and skills and shape their civic character and commitments. The family, religious institutions, the media, and community groups exert important influences. In the United States, at least, schools bear a special and historic responsibility for the development of civic competence and civic responsibility. Schools fulfill that responsibility through both formal and informal curricula beginning in the earliest grades and continuing through the entire educational process.

Formal instruction in civics and government should provide students with a basic understanding of civic life, politics, and government. It should help them understand the workings of their own and other political systems as well as the relationship of their nation's politics and government to world affairs. Formal instruction provides a basis for understanding the rights and responsibilities of citizens in any constitutional democracy and a framework for competent and responsible participation.

The formal curriculum should be augmented by related learning experiences in both school and community that enable students to learn how to participate in their own governance. In addition to the

formal curriculum, the importance of the informal curriculum should be recognized. The informal curriculum refers to the governance of the school community and relationships among those within it. These relationships must embody the fundamental values and principles of constitutional democracy. Classrooms and schools should be managed by adults who govern in accordance with constitutional values and principles and who display traits of character worth emulating. Students should be held accountable for behaving in accordance with fair and reasonable standards and for respecting the rights and dignity of others, including their peers.

As the IEA study and first hand accounts reveal, almost all developed democracies and emerging democracies note the need for civic education. However, this vital part of the student's overall education is seldom given sustained and systematic attention in the elementary and secondary curricula. Inattention to civic education stems in part from the assumption that the knowledge and skills citizens need emerge as by-products of the study of other disciplines or as an outcome of the process of schooling itself.

While it is true that history, economics, literature, and other subjects do enhance students' understanding of government and politics, they cannot replace sustained, systematic attention to civic education. Therefore, our Center has developed the following position statement that we think should guide the development of educational policy in every state and school district in our country. We hope you will find it useful in considering how you think civic education should be implemented in Indonesia.

Position Statement on Educational Policy

- Education in civics and government should not be incidental to the schooling of American youth but a central purpose of education essential to the well being of American democracy.

- Civics and government is a subject on a level with other subjects. Civics and government, like history and geography, is an integrative and interdisciplinary subject.

- Civics and government should be taught explicitly and systematically from kindergarten through twelfth grade whether as separate units and courses or as a part of courses in other subjects.

- Effective instruction in civics and government requires attention to the content of the discipline as well as to the essential skills, principles, and values required for full participation in and reasoned commitment to our democratic system.

Elements of systemic reform

Once a decision has been made to develop and institutionalize effective civic education programs in public or private schools in a nation, there are a number of tasks to be accomplished. These include:

Task 1. Standards. Development and establishment of content and performance standards in civics and government

Task 2. Curriculum framework. Development and adoption of a K-12 curriculum framework in civic education

Task 3. Required courses. Formal requirements for instruction in civics and government in the school curriculum

Task 4. Curricular materials. Provision of instructional materials aligned with the

standards and curriculum framework

Task 5. Teacher education. Establishment of pre-service and in-service education programs to develop the capacity of teachers to provide high quality instruction in the use of the instructional materials in order to promote attainment of the standards

Task 6. Leadership and network training. Establishment of training programs to enhance the capacities of leaders of civic education programs in program planning, budgeting, networking, administration, implementation, curriculum development, evaluation, and tasks related to systemic implementation of civic education

Task 7. Assessment. Establishment of assessment programs to determine student attainment of standards

Task 8. Credentialing. Establishment of licensure to insure that teachers develop the subject matter and pedagogical expertise needed to prepare all students to meet the standards

The accomplishment of these tasks would insure that civic education improvement efforts are well coordinated and that they form a comprehensive and rational approach to the improvement and institutionalization of effective programs in civics and government in any nation. It is obvious that addressing all of these tasks at once would require time and resources available to few organizations or institutions. Therefore, depending upon the circumstances in a nation it would be reasonable to focus attention solely on a single task such as the development of standards, a curriculum framework,or a teacher education program. In other circumstances a set of tasks might be addressed such as the implementation of a pilot program including development of curricular materials, teacher training, classroom instruction, and evaluation. I believe this is the approach that has been wisely chosen by CICED.

V. What is the value of international exchanges and cooperation in the development and implementation of civic education programs?

For the past twenty years our Center has engaged in exchange programs with other nations, mostly western European nations. During the past ten years, however, we have become increasingly involved with colleagues from emerging democracies in former Soviet and Yugoslav nations, Latin America, Africa, and Asia.

These exchanges have enabled us to share our knowledge, experiences, and programs with colleagues in other nations as we are doing at this conference and in our cooperative program with CICED. Some people have found our programs useful in their own countries and that has pleased us immensely. Some have borrowed our programs, improved upon them, and returned better versions for us to use in the United States. This is even more rewarding.

The Center and the teachers who have participated in these exchanges have benefited immensely from working with colleagues abroad. Our experiences have greatly enhanced our understanding of other nations and broadened our view of our own political history, current events, and the relationship of the United States to other nations and their people.

What we have learned we have shared in classrooms throughout the United States. Our students are gaining a broader perspective on the political history and current situations in other nations, a greater

understanding of their people, and concern for their wellbeing.

I think the following statement is particularly relevant today. It is interesting to note that this statement was made by U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1959.

> *What we call foreign affairs is no longer foreign affairs. Whatever happens in Indonesia is important to Indiana.... We cannot escape each other....*

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